Increase in rail accidents

†1317. SHRIJANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the number of train accidents has increase during the last two years;

(b) if so, whether it is also a fact that the reason behind these accidents is misuse of modem technique by the employees;

(c) if so, whether Government have taken any steps to minimize the train accidents and also to check the misuse of modern technique by employees; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) No, Sir. Safety is the prime concern of Indian Railways and all possible steps are undertaken on a continuing basis to prevent accidents. These measures include timely replacement of over aged assets, adoption of suitable technologies for upgradation and maintenance of track, rolling stock, signaling and interlocking systems, safety drives and inspections at regular Intervals to monitor and educate staff for observance of safe practices. As a result the number of consequential train accidents have come down from 473 in 2002-2001 to 415 in 2001 -2002,351 in 2002-2003,325 in 2003-2004, and further to 234 in 2004-05.

Rail accidents

1318. SHRI GIREESH KUMAR SANGHI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact the there was a report which says that 6 accidents take place every week in India;

(b) if so, the steps taken by his Ministry from time to time; and

(c) the details about safety mechanism in place as of now?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) to (d) Safety is the prime concern of Indian Railways and all possible steps are undertaken on a continuing basis to prevent

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

accidents. These measures include timely replacement of over aged assets, adoption of suitable technologies for upgradation and maintenance of track, rolling stock, signaling and interlocking systems, safety drives and inspections at regular intervals to monitor and educate staff for observance of safe practices. As a result the number of consequential train accidents have come down from 473 in 2000-2001 to 415 in 2001-2002,351 in 2002-2003,325 in 2003-2004, and further to 234, averaging to 4.5 accidents per week in 2004-2005.

Increase In speed of trains

1319. SHRI B.K. HARfPRASAD: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have set a minimum bench mark of 55 km/hour for around 200 superfast trains today which are earning extra revenue through supplementary surcharge on fare;

(b) whether most of these superfast trains run on sectors served by Rajdhani/Shatabdi the tracks for which have been upgraded for speeds beyond 100 km/hour; and

(c) whether Government would consider increasing the speed of these superfast trains to a minimum benchmark of 80 km per hour on such upgraded segments and thereby justify the extra surcharge levied and also to ensure efficient deployment of rakes on return journeys?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) and (b) As per the criteria fixed by railways, trains the average commercial speed of which, on the entire run in both directions, is minimum 55 Kmph on Broad Gauge & 45 Kmph on the Metre Gauge are designated as superfast irrespective of the type of tracks used, and a nominal surcharge is levied for travel by these trains.

(c) No such proposal is under consideration at present.

Disability Act, 1995

1320. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether disabled employees of Northern Railway held a candle light march recently in New Delhi demanding implementation of the Disability Act, 1995 in the Railways;